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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 007803

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [IN](#) [PK](#) [INDO](#) [PAK](#)

SUBJECT: HOME SECRETARY OPTIMISTIC ON PAKISTANI TIES, BUT
LAMENTES SLOW PROGRESS ON TERRORISM

Classified By: DCM Robert Blake, Jr. for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

11. (C) Summary: Reviewing India-Pakistan relations for visiting US Ambassador to Islamabad Ryan Crocker, Home Secretary VK Duggal observed on October 4 that Indo-Pak

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relations are generally "on the upswing," but lamented the lack of concrete evidence of a change of Pakistani intentions toward India. Duggal stressed the need for Pakistan to dismantle infrastructure to support terrorism. Despite reservations about Islamabad's sincerity, however, PM Manmohan Singh has directed the GOI to continue the policy of rapprochement with Pakistan. End Summary.

Rapprochement Popular

12. (C) Noting the broad responsibilities of the Ministry of Home Affairs in most aspects of Indo-Pak relations, Duggal observed that, in Confidence-Building Measures, people-to-people exchanges, cultural and sports exchanges, and new and proposed bus services between India and Pakistan, "everything seems to be moving okay." He regretted the "lost opportunity" to expand tourism when Pakistan decided at the last minute to refuse visas to a delegation from India's tourism and travel industry, pointing out that India's 300-million-strong (and growing) middle class would be enthusiastic tourists to Pakistan, boosting cross-border ties and adding to Pakistan's economy.

13. (C) Domestic Indian tourism in Jammu and Kashmir is also a product of warming ties and a reduced number of security incidents, Duggal said, noting that 400,000 to 500,000 tourists had visited J&K this year, and that the GOI had been able to open the Vaishno Devi shrine to a record number of pilgrims.

Less Positive on Security

14. (C) Duggal commented that he would "like to say" that things are better on the security front, but despite Pakistan's statements against cross-border terrorism, the facts on the ground do not provide enough evidence of an irreversible change in policy. Sometimes, he observed, the right hand may not know what the left hand is doing, but if terrorist incidents occur regularly, it is more difficult for the GOI to accept that it is not state policy. However, he noted, infiltration across the line of control and terrorist attacks in India have declined somewhat, and the overall level of terrorism is not too high to prevent India from moving forward in its dialogue with Pakistan.

15. (C) Unfortunately, Duggal continued, while the number of incidents has declined, the choice of targets in recent incidents has dismayed New Delhi. Bombs in Srinagar that targeted schools and marketplaces are more difficult to accept than attacks on army personnel, and the July 5 attack on the disputed Ayodhya temple complex "could have been a major disaster" had the attackers been able to reach the temple itself.

Cooperation Continues Despite Frustrations

16. (C) In addition to continuing terrorism and infiltration, India has evidence of militant training camps in Pakistan and the entry of Pakistani-backed terrorists into India via Nepal and Bangladesh, Duggal stated. Despite a 1989 agreement to return wanted criminals, Pakistan has not made any steps to extradite persons wanted by India, including Dawood Ibrahim and the Sikh organizers of the May 22 New Delhi cinema bombings, Duggal complained. Nevertheless, PM Manmohan Singh has instructed the security services to take defensive actions to guard the country against terrorism, even as the GOI continues the peace dialogue with Islamabad. While New Delhi would like a "quid pro quo," Duggal commented, the process is still "quid, quid, quid."

17. (C) Ambassador Crocker pointed out Islamabad's commitment to its ongoing anti-terrorist operations in North Waziristan, including the willingness to take casualties, observing that Musharraf appears to have realized that he cannot afford to

lose the campaign against militant groups. Islamabad may not yet have decided its strategy for reining in the terrorist groups, but it has concluded that they are dangerous to Pakistan, and Musharraf realizes that the insurgency in Kashmir is linked to the groups who attempted to assassinate him. Even Pakistani mass media coverage of Kashmiri leaders has shown evidence of this shift in the last year, focusing on more moderate figures in place of hard-liners like Geelani, who used to be featured.

Still a Ways to Go

18. (C) Duggal agreed with Ambassador Crocker's assessment of Pakistan's choices, but pointed out that comprehensively stopping terrorism would be difficult for Islamabad because of the extensive network of madrassas, training camps, weapons procurement rings, and drug mafias that combined to support militancy. Kashmir has had "absolutely free" elections, he said, and Pakistan has no more reason to speak about freedom for Kashmir. He noted that India and Pakistan had agreed five years before to cooperate against the drug trafficking that funds the terror networks, but complained Pakistan had not yet agreed to the MOU to govern that cooperation. However, he concluded, PM Singh's decision to continue rapprochement guides GOI policy, and the security services have been able to cope with the current level of threats emanating from Pakistan.

19. (U) Ambassador Crocker has cleared this message.

110. (U) Visit New Delhi's Classified Website:
(<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/sa/newdelhi/>)
Mulford